

Intereach Children's Services

Death of a Child Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC) and Intereach Out of School Hours (OOSH)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version	2.0	Date approved	29/09/2022	Next review date	29/09/2025

1. Objective

In the event of such tragic circumstance as the death of a child, Intereach educators and staff will follow the procedure as set out below.

The sudden death of a child has the potential to render individuals and groups feeling helpless. Death can create distress and difficulties for many, especially when people have little experience in dealing with it. Educators, staff, children, and families will be supported when dealing with the death of a child who is in their care.

2. Definition

Death of a child

- while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service, or
- following an incident while that child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service

3. Responsibilities

In the unlikely event of a death of a child while in care at an Intereach Children's Service, It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor to:

- Provide professional and sensitive communication with families of the Service.
- demonstrate sensitivity, open mindedness and a balanced approach to recognise cultural needs and support the parent/guardian;
- ensure accurate and detailed record keeping and preserve all relevant evidence.

It is the responsibility of the staff and educators to:

- ensure immediate and appropriate action is taken in the event of the death of a child whilst at the service by following and implementing the procedure;
- follow any directions given by the authorities and cooperate with the investigation; and,
- ensure records are kept for seven years from the date of the child's death. (Refer to *Data security and retention Policy*).

4. Procedure

In the unlikely event of a death of a child while in care at an Intereach Children's Service, staff and educators must implement the following procedure:

4.1. Actions by staff/educators

- Emergency guidelines DRSABCD is followed as per first aid training.
- Triple Zero ('000') is called and a request for an ambulance service is made immediately. In a FDC educator's home, these two actions will be done simultaneously, and the child may need to be carried to the phone or the phone used at the location of the child.
- Resuscitation is continued until the ambulance arrives.

- The Nominated Supervisor is notified immediately (Refer to *Notification of serious incident procedure*).
- All directions given by the attending authorities are followed.
- An *Incident Report Form* is completed within 24 hours of the incident.
- Accurate and detailed record keeping is maintained.

4.2. Actions by Nominated Supervisor

- The parent/guardian are notified that a serious incident has occurred and they are advised to contact the relevant medical agency. This information should be provided in a compassionate manner.
- report all serious incidents as per the *Notification of Serious Incidents Procedure* (Refer to the Intereach Risk and Incident Policy) and the per the *Serious Incidents Procedure*;
 - to the Executive Team, SM WHS and Quality immediately; and,
 - to the regulatory authority through the NQA IT System as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours; (Refer to *Notification of Serious Incidents Procedure*).
- Arrange for two staff to go immediately to the service, educator's location/premises or excursion location:
 - one staff member will remain with the educator while the other will supervise the children and organise their collection from care; and,
 - maintain clear emergency procedures for the other children at the service while maintaining a calm atmosphere.
- All directions given by the attending authorities are followed and ongoing cooperation is provided with the investigation.

4.3. Wellbeing of Staff, Educators, Families and Children

- Counselling services are organised and made available for all educators, staff, families and children affected by the incident.
- An appropriate person is arranged to conduct a debriefing session with staff and educators (and families if appropriate).
- Support and guidance will be sought from Professional to provide appropriate materials to send home to families to assist in understanding the effects of trauma on children.

Note: It is not the role of the service to inform the parent/guardian that their child has died. A doctor is the only person who can determine whether a person has died and be responsible for organising notification to be given to Next of Kin.

5. National Quality Framework

Element	Concept	Description
2.2.2	Incident and Emergency Management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

5. Context	
5.1. Standards or other external requirements	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), National Quality Standards Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), Guide to the National Quality Framework Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Childcare Service Handbook, 2017 - 2018 Dent, A. (2004), Sudden death in childhood, support for the bereaved family
5.2. Legislation or other requirements	Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
5.3. Internal Documentation	Intereach Risk and Incident Policy Data Security and Retention Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Form Notification of Serious Incidents Procedure

6. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	13/12/2019	R. Phillips - Acting Senior Manager, Children and Family Services	13/12/2022
2.0	29/09/2022	M.Tai – General Manager, Operations	29/09/2025